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UPI-124

(CIA)

WASHINGTON--PRESIDENT JOHNSON TODAY TOLD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THEY ARE "WELL SERVED" BY THE CIA EVEN THOUGH ITS OPERATIONS MUST REMAIN SUPER SECRET.

JOHNSON MADE THE REMARK DURING A SHORT WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY DURING WHICH HE PRESENTED THE NATIONAL SECURITY MEDAL TO RETIRED VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. RABORN JR., RECENTLY REPLACED AS HEAD OF THE CIA. JOHNSON PRAISED RABORN FOR HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING HIS ACTIVE NAVY CAREER IN WHICH HE HELPED DEVELOP THE FIRST POLARIS-MISSILE SUBMARINE.

JOHNSON THEN NOTED HE CALLED RABORN TO HEAD THE CIA LAST YEAR FOR "THE MOST FORMIDABLE TASK OF YOUR CAREER."

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE SAID THE PUBLIC KNEW ABOUT RABORN'S ATOMIC SUBMARINE ACCOMPLISHMENT BUT THEY "CANNOT OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS" WITH THE CIA BECAUSE OF THE SECRECY SURROUNDING THE ORGANIZATION.

JOHNSON GAVE CREDIT TO CIA AGENTS WHO "WORK IN SILENCE, SOMETIMES FAIL IN SILENCE AND MORE OFTEN SUCCEED IN SILENCE."

JOHNSON NOTED THAT CIA OFFICIALS ARE "SOMETIMES SUBJECT TO CRITICISM THEY CANNOT ANSWER" IN AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO RECENT NEWS AND MAGAZINE STORIES ABOUT THE CIA.

8/17--GE202P

This article was also carried by the Associated Press.